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(54) Packing case and opening method therefor.

(57) A package material for accommodating a container cartridge (1) provided with an ink supply portion integral with a recording head in use includes a package material for accommodating the container cartridge, provided with opening means (22) for per-

mitting opening of the package material; a sealing material (5) for sealing an ink supply portion of the container cartridge; wherein the sealing member is at least partly mounted to the package material.

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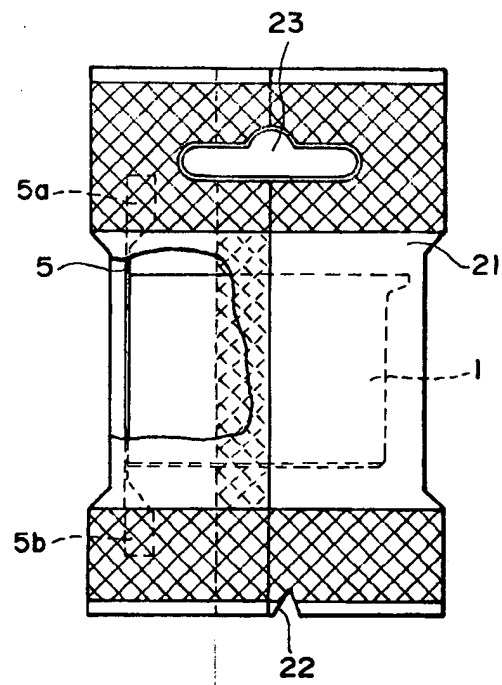


FIG. 7

FIELD OF THE INVENTION AND RELATED ART

The present invention relates to a packing case and an opening method therefor for an exchangeable ink cartridge for containing ink to be supplied to a recording head, the container being detachably mounted to an ink jet recording head. Types of ink cartridge detachably mountable relative to an ink jet recording apparatus are classified into two groups. In one of them, it is connected with a recording head fixedly mounted on a recording apparatus, through a flexible tube, and it is detachably mountable to the recording apparatus. In this type, a flexible generally flat bladder is accommodated in a casing of plastic material, and the bladder is provided with a jointing portion of an elastic material for supplying the ink out. The ink is contained in the sealed bladder. Such an ink cartridge can be put on market or transported without paying particular attention to the structure of a package therefor.

In a second type, an ink cartridge is integrally constituted by a recording head and an ink container, and the integral ink cartridge is detachably mountable to an apparatus as a unit. This type is used, since downsizing is possible.

An ink cartridge, generally, is provided with an ink absorbing material, and is provided with an air vent for fluid communication between the inside of the ink container and the outside thereof to permit supply of the ink therein. The recording head is provided with an ink ejection outlet or outlets, and therefore, the possibility that the ink leaks out through the ink ejection outlet or the air vent, is not avoidable.

In order to prevent the ink leakage during the transportation of the ink cartridge, both of the ink ejection outlet and the air vent or only the ink ejection outlet when the air vent has a structure for preventing the ink leakage, is sealed by an elastic material or an adhesive sealing tape. It is contained in a rigid casing, and an opening of the casing is covered with a covering member having a property of preventing water introduction. Then, it is packaged and put on the market. When the sealing tape is used, the portion of the sealing tape sealing the air vent is first opened, and only then, the sealing tape portion for the ink ejection outlet is removed preferably, to assure the safe removal of the sealing tape in case that the internal pressure of the ink container is increased due to ambient condition change (pressure change or temperature change) or due to the transportation thereof.

Recently, for the purpose of downsizing and inexpensive ink replenishment (consuming material), and for the purpose of effective use of a recording head having a relatively long service life, a separable head cartridge and container cartridge

has been proposed in which the ink container and the recording head are separable from each other.

Referring to Figure 1, there is shown such an ink container cartridge of this type.

An outer wall of the container cartridge 1 is provided with an ink supply port 2 for supplying the ink to a recording head 11. When an ink supply tube 12 is connected with an ink supply port 2, a liquid passage is established between the ink container cartridge 1 and the recording head 11. In another case, the ink supply port and the ink supply tube 12 are connected with an unshown connecting tube.

An air vent 3 is formed through an outer wall of the ink container cartridge 1 to permit introduction of the air thereinto. The inside of the ink container 1 is filled with an ink retaining material 4. By a proper ink retaining power of the retaining material, the leaking of the ink through the recording head 11 is prevented, while permitting the proper ink supply to the recording head. Examples of the material of the ink retaining material 4 include felt, porous material having continuous pores, or the like. Particularly, it is preferable to use sponge of polyurethane foam or the like because it is easy to adjust the ink retaining power.

The ink supply port 2, and preferably the air vent 3 also, are required to be hermetically sealed to prevent ink leakage or ink evaporation until it is connected with the ink supply tube 12 of the recording head 11 for use, that is, during the transportation or storage thereof before the use thereof. For the purpose of this sealing, a sealing tape 5 is generally used. For example, the sealing tape 5 is a barrier material (so-called in the field of packing). A material similar to the body of the container cartridge 1 is used as a bonding layer for the barrier material, so that the bonding layer is fused to increase the sealing property. This is preferable.

Figures 2A and 2B illustrate prior art of the sealing of the ink supply port 2 using a sealing tape 5. Figure 2A is a perspective view illustrating a sealing tape 5 and a wall 1a of the container cartridge 1 which has the ink supply port 2. Figure 2B is a sectional view of the ink supply port 2 in the state that it is sealed by the sealing tape 5.

In Figure 2B, between the sealing tape 5 and the ink retaining material 4, there is a gap to corresponding to the thickness of the wall of the container cartridge 1, in the ink supply port 2. Therefore, upon ambient condition change, vibration imparted thereto, or change with time, or the like during the transportation of the container cartridge 1, the ink retained by the ink retaining material seeps out into the gap and stagnates there. If this occurs, the stagnated ink scatters outwardly when the sealing tape 5 is removed for the purpose of using the container cartridge 1. Then, the fingers

or the cloths of the operator will be contaminated. In addition, the scattered ink is wasted. In addition, even if the ambient condition change or the change with time is less, the shock upon the removal of the sealing tape 5, or pressing by the fingers to the container cartridge 1 upon the removal of the sealing tape 5, may result in the scattering of the ink. In order to avoid this, the removal operation of the sealing tape 5 has to be carried out with quite high care, thus deteriorating the operativity.

If the structure of the ink container cartridge described hereinbefore is used as the structure of the container cartridge, there arises a problem from the standpoint of the ink supply to the recording head (it is difficult to produce a desired negative pressure). In addition, the structure of the ink supply port becomes bulky with cost increase.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is a yet further object of the present invention to provide an ink container cartridge with which the quantity of the ink scattered or discharged out of the container cartridge through an opening or openings of the cartridge is small when the opening or openings are unsealed.

Accordingly, it is a principal object of the present invention to provide a packing case and an opening method therefor with which ink scattering from the ink supply port is avoided upon the removal of the ink sealing tape, thus facilitating the removing operation of the sealing tape.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a container cartridge packing case which is reliable during transportation alone.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a packing case for a container cartridge having a simple configuration and simple structure in the connecting portion between an ink jet recording head and a container cartridge, and which does not obstruct downsizing of the ink jet recording apparatus.

According to an aspect of the present invention, there is provided a package material for accommodating a container cartridge provided with an ink supply portion integral with a recording head in use, comprising: a package material for accommodating the container cartridge, provided with opening means for permitting opening of the package material; a sealing material for sealing an ink supply portion of the container cartridge; wherein the sealing member is at least partly mounted to the package material.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of opening a package accommodating a container cartridge provided with an ink supply portion which is integral with a recording head in use, comprising: exposing

only a part of the container cartridge by opening the passage; removing a sealing member which is integral with a packing material by taking the container cartridge out of the package material.

According to a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided an ink container cartridge having a small volume of a space in which the ink can occupy and from which the ink scatters upon unsealing the cartridge.

These and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent upon a consideration of the following description of the preferred embodiments of the present invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a perspective view of an example of a head cartridge and a container cartridge.

Figures 2A and 2B illustrate a configuration of an ink supply port in a conventional ink container and a sealing for the ink supply port using a sealing tape.

Figure 3 shows an example of a container cartridge.

Figure 4 illustrates a configuration of an ink supply port in a container cartridge and sealing for an ink supply port by a sealing material.

Figure 5 shows an example of a configuration of an ink supply port in a container cartridge and sealing for an ink supply port by a sealing material.

Figure 6 shows a configuration of an ink supply port in a container cartridge and sealing for an ink supply port by a sealing material, in a further example.

Figure 7 illustrates an example of a packing case containing a container cartridge.

Figure 8 illustrates an example in which a packing case is opened.

Figure 9 illustrates another example of a packing case containing a container cartridge.

Figure 10 illustrates another example in which the packing case is opened.

Figure 11 illustrates a further example of a packing case containing a container cartridge.

Figure 12 is a perspective view illustrating a method of opening the packing case of Figure 11.

Figure 13 illustrates the packing case of Figure 11 when it is opened.

Figure 14 illustrates the packing case of Figure 11, from which the ink cartridge is being taken out.

Figure 15 illustrates a further example of a packing case containing a container cartridge.

Figure 16 is a perspective view of an example of an ink jet recording apparatus.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The preferred embodiments of the present invention will be described in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

Figure 3 is a perspective view of an exchangeable container cartridge 1 to which the present invention is applied.

As shown in Figure 3, the container cartridge 1 is provided at least with an ink supply port 2 for connection with an unshown ink supply tube of an ink jet recording head, and an air vent 3 for permitting introduction of the air required for the ink to be supplied out from the container cartridge 1.

The present invention is applicable to a container cartridge 1 if it is provided with at least two openings such as an ink supply port 2 and an air vent 3, irrespective of the structure in the container cartridge 1. Accordingly, it may be a container cartridge integral with an ink jet recording head and containing porous ink retaining material in the entirety of the ink container, a container cartridge containing only ink therein, and a container cartridge in the form of a combination of the above two, which, for example, comprises an opening for connection with an ink jet recording head, a negative pressure generating material accommodating portion for accommodating a negative pressure generating material (ink absorbing material), an ink accommodating portion adjacent to the negative pressure generating material and connected therewith at a bottom. However, the present invention is suitably applicable to an ink cartridge having a negative pressure generating material accommodating portion and an ink accommodating portion.

Figures 4A and 4B illustrate an ink container cartridge according to a first embodiment of the present invention. Figure 4A is a perspective view of such a wall of the container cartridge as is provided with an ink supply port 2. Figure 4B is a sectional view of the ink supply port 2 which is hermetically sealed by a sealing tape (material) 5. Designated by a reference 1a is a part of the wall provided with the ink supply port 2 in the container cartridge.

In this embodiment, as shown in Figure 4B, the portion around the ink supply port 2 is provided with a thin wall portion 1a, so that the thickness of the container cartridge wall t_1 is smaller than that t_0 of a conventional wall of Figure 3. Therefore, the gap between the sealing tape 5 and the ink retaining member 4 at the ink supply port 2 is t_1 , and therefore, a volume of the space formed there is t_1/t_0 , as compared with the conventional volume, thus reducing the volume of the space in which the ink from the ink retaining material 4 can stagnate. Therefore, the quantity of the ink stagnating there

can be reduced to such an extent that the quantity of the ink scattered upon the removal of the sealing tape 5 does not result in contamination. Additionally, the waste of the ink can be avoided. In other words, the sealing tape 5 can be easily removed, thus improving the operativity.

Normally, the container cartridge is manufactured by molding a plastic material. In this case, there exists a proper wall thickness (basic wall thickness) for permitting proper molding. It is different if the material is different. For this reason, it is not preferable to reduce the thickness t_1 too much. However, by reducing it as much as possible, the above described object can be accomplished.

Another configuration other than that shown in Figure 4 is usable to reduce the wall thickness of the ink container. The cross-section of the ink supply port 2 may be other than circular which is shown in Figure 4.

In this embodiment, the periphery of the ink supply port 2 is projected into a rib 2a. By doing so, the bonding of the sealing tape 5 is assured so as to prevent leakage of the ink through the bonding surface. The rib may be formed similarly around the air vent 3. Figure 5 illustrates a container cartridge according to another embodiment. Figure 5A is a perspective view of a wall portion of the container cartridge provided with the ink supply port 2. Figure 5B is a sectional view of an ink supply port 2 which is sealed by a sealing tape 5. Designated by a reference 1a is a part of a wall provided with the ink supply port 2.

In this embodiment, as shown in Figure 5B, the peripheral portion of the ink supply port 2 is recessed into the container cartridge 1 (1A), so that the wall 1a is recessed into the inside by a thickness t_4 . By this, the ink retaining material 2 is compressed in a direction of an arrow C1 by the recess 1a of the container cartridge wall. Thus, the ink retaining material bulges by its elasticity toward the space in the ink supply port 2 in the direction of an arrow C2. In this manner, the space formed between the sealing tape 5 and the ink retaining member 4 in the ink supply port 2 is partly occupied by the ink retaining material 4, so that the volume of the space is reduced as compared with the conventional example shown in Figure 2. Accordingly, the volume of the space in which the ink from the ink retaining material 2 can stagnate, can be reduced.

The degree t_4 of the recess of the container wall is properly determined by one skilled in the art in accordance with the size of the ink supply port 2 and the elasticity of the ink retaining material 4, with the view to reducing the volume as much as possible.

The configuration of the recess is not limited to that shown in Figure 5. In addition, the cross-section of the ink supply port 2 may be other than circular, which is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 6 illustrates an ink container according to a further embodiment of the present invention. Figure 6A is a perspective view of a wall portion of the ink container provided with the ink supply port 13. Figure 6B is a sectional view of the ink supply port 13 which is sealed by a sealing member 16. Designated by a reference numeral 51 is a part of the wall provided with the ink supply port 13.

As shown in Figure 6B, in this embodiment, there is provided a projected portion 1a projected outwardly, at the periphery of the ink supply port 2. The degree of projection is indicated by t_s . The size of the ink retaining material 4 measured in a direction of an arrow D2 is such that it extends beyond an inside surface of the container by not less than t_s . The ink retaining material is compressed in a direction D1, and therefore, the elasticity thereof provides such a configuration that it is bulged in a direction D2 toward the space in the ink supply port 2. In this manner, the ink retaining material 4 partly occupies the space formed between the sealing tape 5 and the ink retaining material 4 in the ink supply port 2, so that the volume in the space is reduced as compared with the conventional example of Figure 2. Thus, the space permitting ink stagnation can be reduced.

The degree of projection t_s of the ink container wall is properly determined by one skilled in the art in accordance with degree of compression in the direction D1 and the elasticity of the ink retaining material 4 and a size of the ink supply port 2, with the view to reducing the volume of the space as much as possible.

The configuration of the projection 1a may be other than shown in Figure 6. In addition, the configuration of the ink supply port 2 may be non-circular, although circular example is shown in Figure 6.

The above-described embodiments may be combined properly if the volume of the space in the ink supply port 2 can be reduced.

In the following, the description will be made as to embodiments of packing cases which can avoid contamination with ink upon unsealing.

Figure 7 illustrates a container cartridge packing case according to an embodiment of the present invention. The openings 2 and 3 of the container cartridge 1 are sealed by a sealing tape 5. A fusing layer of the sealing tape 5 and a fusing layer of the packing material 21 are fused together by heat at portions indicated by 5a and 5b. The hatched portions in this Figure are portions of the packing case which are bonded together or another material. The packing case or material 21 is pro-

vided with a notch and a hole engageable with a hook 23 in a shop. The sealing tape and at least two openings of the container cartridge 1 may be bonded by pressure, adhesive material, fusing and/or combination thereof, provided that the sealing is enough to prevent evaporation of the ink in the container cartridge and to endure against expansion of the air or ink therein. From the standpoint of high reliability, fusing type is preferable.

As for the sealing tape 5, a single layer barrier (so-called in the field of package) or a multi-layer barrier is preferably used. It is further preferable that the fusing layer of the sealing tape may be of the same or similar material as the main body of the container cartridge and/or the connecting portion of the package material. Another sealing tape material such as paper is usable, provided that the sealing is possible by pressure, bonding or fusing.

The package material shown in Figure 7 is opened by tearing from the notch 6, as shown in Figure 8 (first opening step). By this, non-sealed portion of the container cartridge (without the sealing tape 4) is exposed. As a second opening step, partly exposed is separated from the package material 21. Upon this separation, it is preferable that the container cartridge 1 is rotated in a direction indicated by arrows a and b. Alternatively, the container cartridge may be pulled off the package material by one hand with the upper part of the package material 21 adjacent the sealing tape 5 being nipped by the fingers of the other hand. By doing so, the ink supply port 2 and the air vent 3 of the container cartridge is unsealed, to permit the container cartridge 1 to be taken out of the package.

In this embodiment, the non-seal portion of the container cartridge is exposed by the first step of the opening action. It should be noted that the container cartridge is, in effect, connected with the packing material 21 by the sealing tape 5, and therefore, the container cartridge does not pop out of the package material 21 by the first opening step. For this reason, contamination can be prevented even if the container cartridge is let fall thereafter. It is not until after the second opening step that the container cartridge is taken out. In addition, when the sealing tape 5 is removed from the opening of the container cartridge, the openings 2 and 3 of the container cartridge are still within the package material. Therefore, even if the ink exists in the openings 2 and 3, the ink scatters only into the package material so that the result is only the contamination of the inside of the package material, without contamination of the operator's hand or wear. By the reduction of the space in the ink supply port 2, the amount of the scattered ink can be reduced.

In an embodiment of Figure 9, the package is perforated at 24. According to this embodiment, the first opening step is facilitated, and it is assured that the first step of the opening results in exposing only a corner portion of the container cartridge. Then, in the second step, the exposed corner portion of the container cartridge is nipped, and a lower portion of the package is nipped by fingers of the other hand, and thereafter, the cartridge is rotated in a direction indicated by an arrow c. As will be understood, the opening provided by the perforation 24 assures the rotational direction (c) when the cartridge is taken out of the package. In this manner, the liability of popping out of the cartridge in the first step can be assuredly prevented.

When the direction of rotation upon the taking out of the container cartridge is limited in this manner, the sealing tape is first removed from the ink supply port 2, and thereafter, it is removed from the air vent 3. Since the size of the air vent 3 is generally smaller, the scattering of the ink from the ink supply port 2 can be further reduced because the first release of the air vent 3 provides the atmospheric pressure with the inside of the ink container, and therefore, the atmospheric pressure is established in the ink container when the ink supply port 2 is released from the sealing tape. This advantageous effect is assured by the manner of the perforation formed in the package, in this embodiment. Referring to Figure 11, there is shown a package according to another embodiment of the present invention.

In this embodiment, one side 5a of the sealing tape 5 is fused along one side of the packing material 21. For easy opening of the packing material 21, a tear tape 25 is bonded or fused on one complete circumferential inside surface of the packing material 21. The position of the tear tape 25 is such that when the package is opened about one half of the cartridge 1 is exposed so as to permit easy handling by the operator. An end of the tear tape 25 projects out for the easy operation. Designated by 26 is a printed portion for an identification mark such as bar code or the like on the package material.

In Figure 11, when the package is hang up on a hook using the opening 23, the air vent 3 and the ink supply port 2 of the container cartridge sealed by the sealing tape 5 are positioned downward. By this positioning, the ink in the container is urged by the gravity toward the ink supply port 2 so that the ink is retained adjacent the ink supply port 2 to permit initial proper ink supply when the cartridge is mounted to the recording head.

Figure 12 illustrates the opening operation. By removing the tear tap 25 in a direction d, the package is opened. With this state, as shown in

Figure 13, a part of the cartridge 1 is exposed. Thus, the first stage of the opening becomes easy without imparting undesirable vibration or the like to the container cartridge. In the second opening step, a portion of the package material 21 where the sealing tape 5 is fused, is nipped by the fingers of one hand, and the exposed portion of the cartridge is nipped by the fingers of the other hand, and the cartridge is rotated in a direction e, as shown in Figure 14. Similarly try the other embodiment, the sealing tape 5 is removed from the ink supply port 2 and the air vent 3 of the container cartridge 1, so that the container cartridge can be taken out of the package 21. By taking out the container cartridge while rotating it, strong impact to the ink supply port 2 can be avoided, and therefore, the ink leakage can be effectively prevented. Even if the ink is scattered, it is scattered only in the package 21, and therefore, there occurs no problem of contamination to the operator. Even if the container cartridge is taken out only by pulling it without the rotational motion, the ink scatters only into the package material, and therefore, no practical problem arises.

In order to prevent leakage of the ink to the outside of the package upon an unexpected situation during the transportation in which the ink leaks out into the package, it is preferable that the package is hermetically sealed. However, from the standpoint of preventing expansion of the package under a reduced pressure upon ambient condition change, the hermetical sealing is not desirable, but it is desirable that the inside of the package is partly opened to the atmosphere. The distribution of the ink in the container cartridge is such that it is dense adjacent the ink supply port 2 to assure the ink supply to the recording head so that as small as possible amount of the ink is present adjacent the air vent 3. Therefore, it is preferable that when the sealing tape is removed from the container cartridge, it is preferable that it is removed first from the air vent 3. When the internal pressure of the container cartridge 1 sealed by the tape 5 is high due to the ambient condition (temperature and pressure change), the opening of the air vent 3 having a smaller opening area than the ink supply port 2 provides the atmospheric pressure with the inside of the ink cartridge, thus properly preventing the ink discharge through the ink supply port 2.

Referring to Figure 15, there is shown a further embodiment in which the order of removal (first the air vent 3, and then the ink supply port 2) of the sealing tape can be further preferably carried out. In this embodiment, a long sealing tape 5 is used the rest of the sealing tape 5 adjacent the portion sealing the air vent 3 is returned into the package and is extended to the outside of the package, and an end 5b of the sealing tape adjacent the portion

sealing the ink supply port 2 is made integral with the package material 21.

When the package is opened, a part of the package 21 is opened, and then, the end 5a extended to the outside is pulled in a direction f. Then, the sealing tape is removed assuredly in the order of the air vent 3 and the ink supply port 2. Alternatively, before the package material 21 is opened, the sealing tape 5 is removed from the air vent 3 and the ink supply port 2 in the order named, and thereafter, the package 21 is opened. In this case, the sealing tape 5 may be further extended along the inside of the package 21 as a tear tape, as shown in Figure 11, in which case the sealing tape 25 is continuous with the tear tape.

As regards the direction of removing the sealing tape from the opening of the container cartridge, it is preferable that the removal occurs at acute angle, since then the removal can be accomplished with smaller force.

In the embodiment of Figure 15, the direction of removal is close to 180 degrees. Referring to Figure 16, there is shown in a perspective view an example of an ink jet recording apparatus IJRA usable with the container cartridge described in the foregoing.

According to the foregoing embodiments of the package case, the ink coming out of the container when the sealing tape is removed is discharged into the package case, and therefore, the discharged ink is of no problem. However, a combination of an embodiment of the ink container described hereinbefore and an embodiment of the package, is desirable since then only a small quantity of the ink is discharged into a package upon the unsealing, from the standpoint of additional reliability and saving sate of ink.

In this Figure, forward or backward rotation of a driving motor 5013 is transmitted to a lead screw 5004 through drive transmission gears 5011 and 5009 to rotate the lead screw 5004. A carriage HC is provided with a pin (not shown) engageable with a helical groove 5005 of the lead screw 5004 so that the carriage HC is reciprocated in a longitudinal direction of the apparatus. Designated by a reference numeral 5002 is a cap for capping a front side of each of recording heads in a recording head unit to be mounted on the carriage HC. It is used for recovery of the recording head, using unshown sucking means for sucking the ink out of the capped space. Each of the recording heads is provided with ejection outlets directed downwardly. Each recording head is conn cted with a container cartridge T. The cap 5002 is moved by a driving force transmitted thereto through a gear 5041 or the like so as to cap the ejection side surface of the recording head. Adjacent the cap 5002, there is provided an unshown cleaning blade for cleaning

the ejection side surface of the recording head. The blade is supported for vertical movement in the Figure. As for the blade, any known cleaning blade is usable.

The capping, cleaning and sucking operations are carried out when the carriage HC has reached the home position by the lead screw 5005. However, they may be carried out at known proper timing.

Connection pads 4502 of the recording head unit mounted on the carriage HC are electrically connected with connection pads 5031 by rotation of a coupling plate 5030 of the carriage HC.

As described in the foregoing, according to the present invention, a volume of a space between a sealing material and an ink retaining material adjacent an ink supply port of the ink container, is reduced by the structure of the wall adjacent the ink supply port, so that the quantity of the ink stagnating in the space is significantly reduced. Therefore, the quantity of the ink scattered from the ink supply port upon removal of the sealing member, can be suppressed, and therefore, the operativity is improved.

According to another aspect of the present invention, the ink leakage or another inconvenience can be avoided during translation thereof alone, so that high reliability is assured with simple structure and low cost.

In addition, any user can easily open the package without scattering of the ink and contamination of the wear or hand thereby.

While the invention has been described with reference to the structures disclosed herein, it is not confined to the details set forth and this application is intended to cover such modifications or changes as may come within the purposes of the improvements or the scope of the following claims.

A package material for accommodating a container cartridge provided with an ink supply portion integral with a recording head in use includes a package material for accommodating the container cartridge, provided with opening means for permitting opening of the package material; a sealing material for sealing an ink supply portion of the container cartridge; wherein the sealing member is at least partly mounted to the package material.

Claims

1. A package material for accommodating a container cartridg provided with an ink supply portion integral with a recording head in use, comprising:

a package material for accommodating th container cartridge, provided with opening means for permitting opening of said package material;

a sealing material for sealing an ink supply portion of the container cartridge;

wherein said sealing member is at least partly mounted to said package material.

2. A package according to Claim 1, wherein said opening means is a notch formed in a part of said package material to permit only a part of the container cartridge remote from the ink supply portion to the exposed, when the package is opened.
3. A package according to Claim 1, wherein said opening means is a perforation in said package to permit only a part of the container cartridge remote from the ink supply portion is exposed, when the package is opened.
4. A package according to Claim 1, wherein said opening means is a tape in said package material to permit only a part of the container cartridge remote from the ink supply portion to be exposed when the package is opened.
5. A package according to Claim 1, wherein said sealing material is in the form of a tape, and one or both of longitudinal ends thereof are fused to the package material.
6. A package according to Claim 1, wherein said sealing material is in the form of a tape, and one lateral side is fused to the package material, and the other lateral end portion seals the ink supply portion.
7. A package according to Claim 1, wherein the package material is provided with an opening, and wherein the ink supply portion is located most remote from the opening.
8. A package according to Claim 1, wherein said container cartridge is provided with an air vent, and wherein said sealing member also seals the air vent.
9. A package according to Claim 1, wherein a wall thickness of the ink supply portion of the container cartridge is smaller than a thickness of a wall portion therearound to provide a volume of the ink supply portion.
10. A package according to Claim 1, wherein said container cartridge contains an ink absorbing material which is deformed by its elasticity into the ink supply portion.
11. A package according to Claim 1, wherein the ink supply portion is enclosed with a rib pro-

jecting outwardly.

12. A package according to Claim 8, wherein the air vent is enclosed with a rib projected outwardly.
13. A method of opening a package accommodating a container cartridge provided with an ink supply portion which is integral with a recording head in use, comprising:
 - exposing only a part of the container cartridge by opening the passage;
 - removing a sealing member which is integral with a packing material by taking the container cartridge out of the package material.
14. A method according to Claim 13, wherein said opening step and removing step are carried out in this order.
15. A method according to Claim 13, wherein said opening step is carried out after said removing step.
16. A method according to Claim 13, wherein a rotational motion is imparted between said package material and said container cartridge in said removing step.
17. A method according to Claim 13, wherein the container cartridge is pulled in said removing step.
18. A method according to Claim 13, wherein the container cartridge is provided with an air vent, and said removing step is effected for the ink supply portion and for the air vent.
19. A method according to Claim 13, wherein said container cartridge is provided with an air vent, and wherein said removing step is effected for the air vent and for the ink supply portion in the order named.

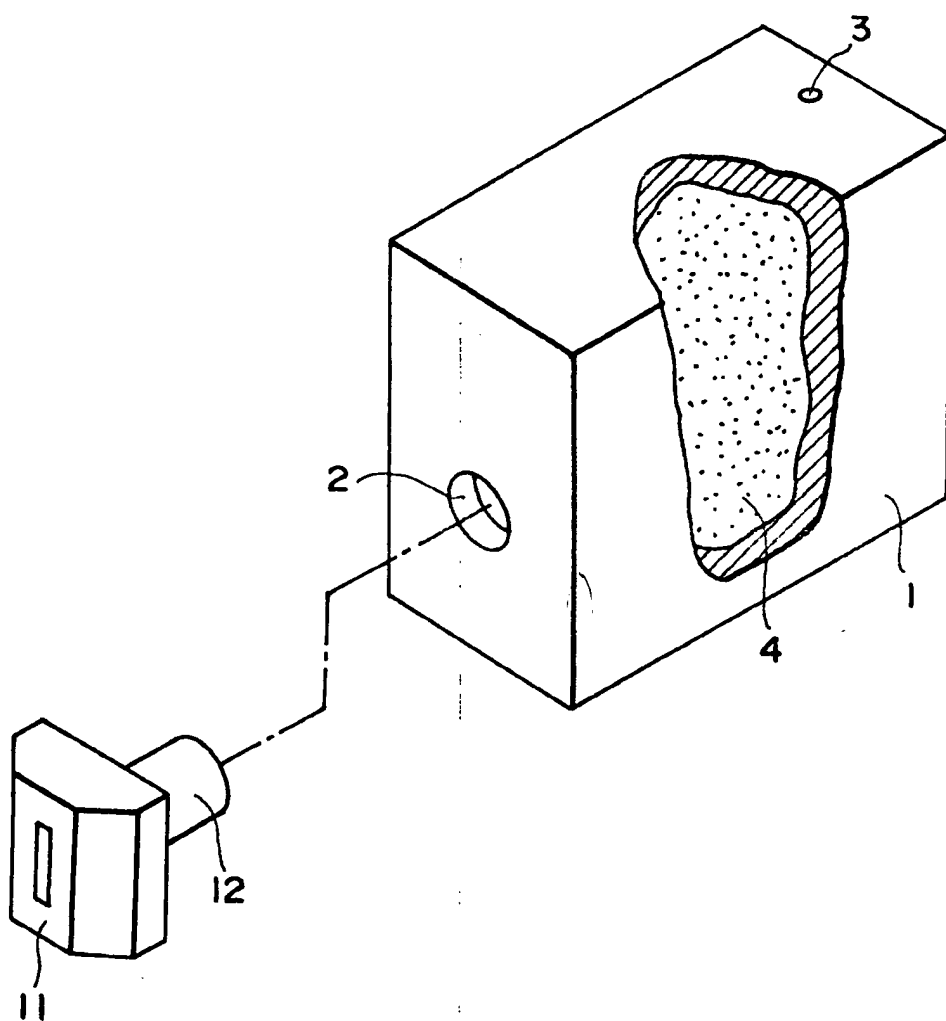


FIG. 1

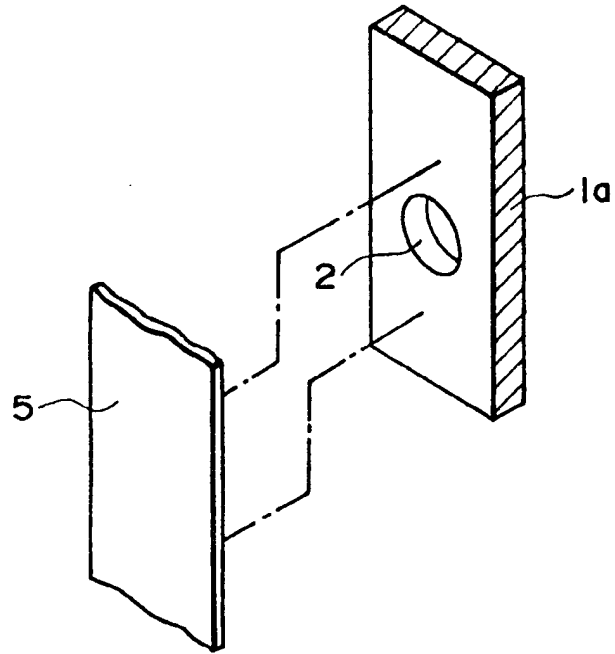


FIG. 2A

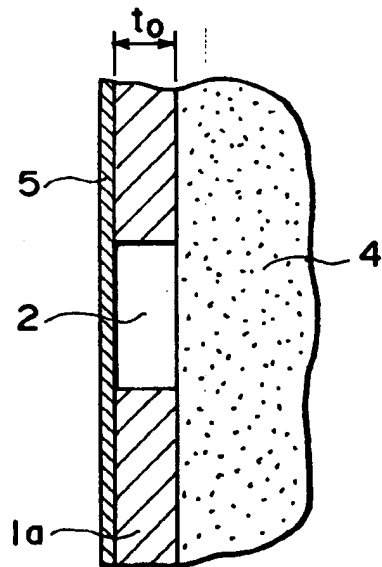


FIG. 2B

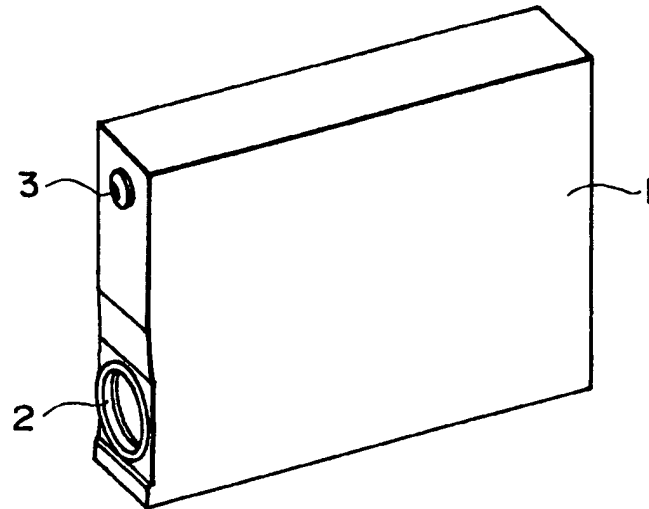


FIG. 3

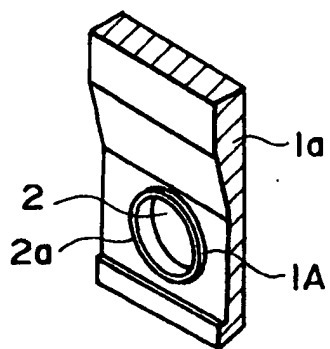


FIG. 4A

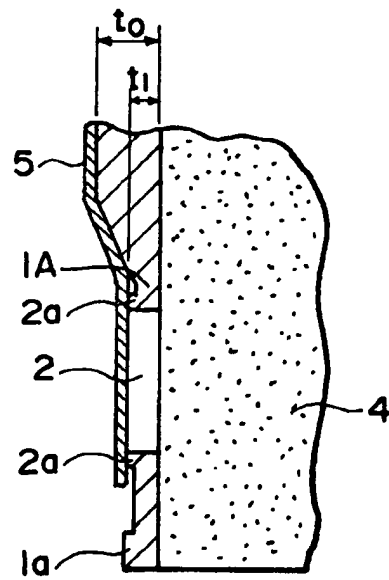


FIG. 4B

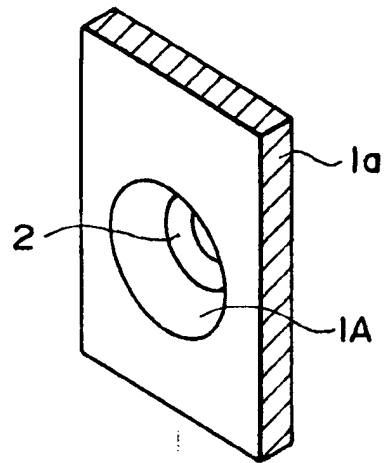


FIG. 5A

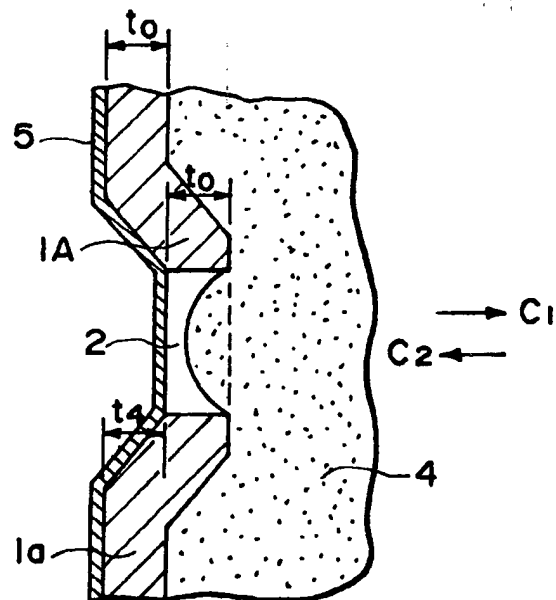


FIG. 5B

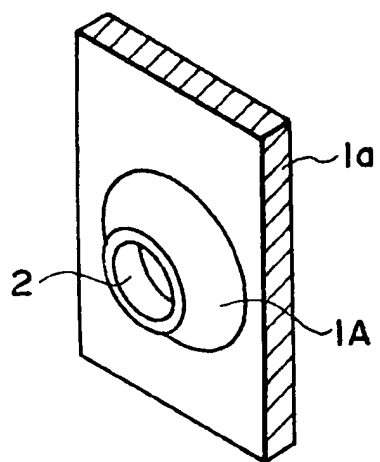


FIG. 6A

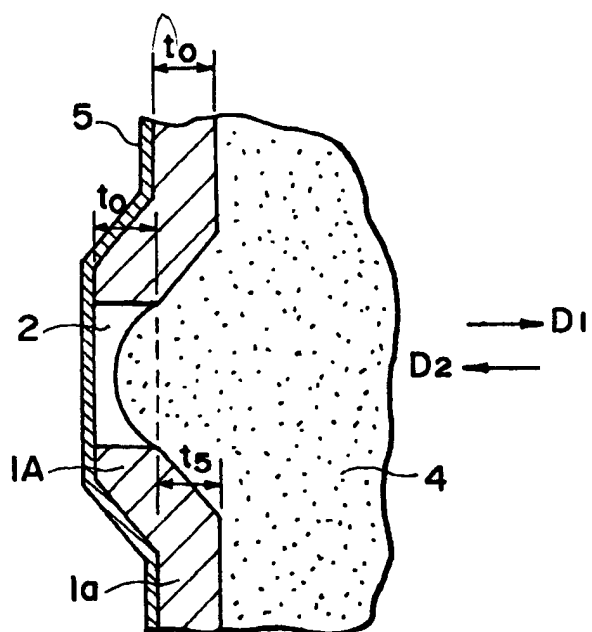


FIG. 6B

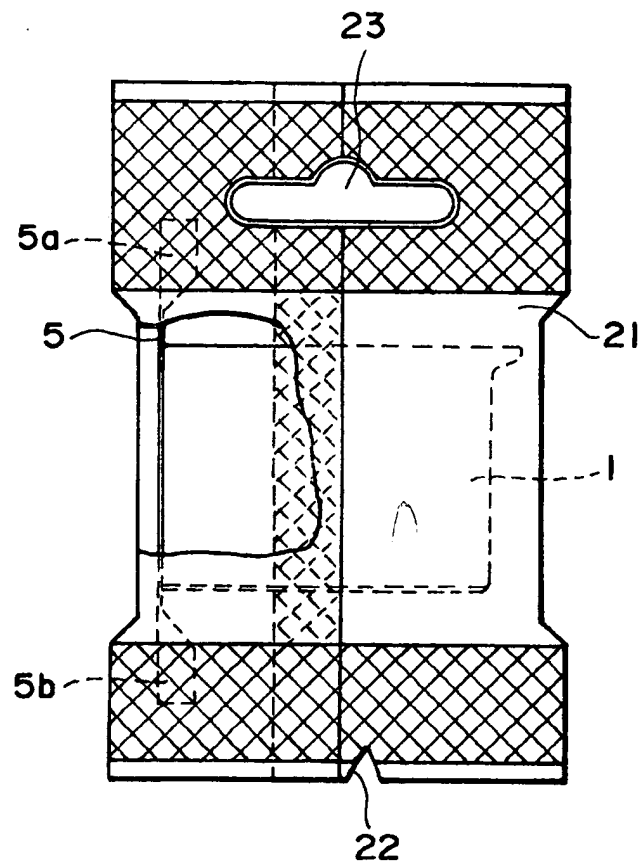


FIG. 7

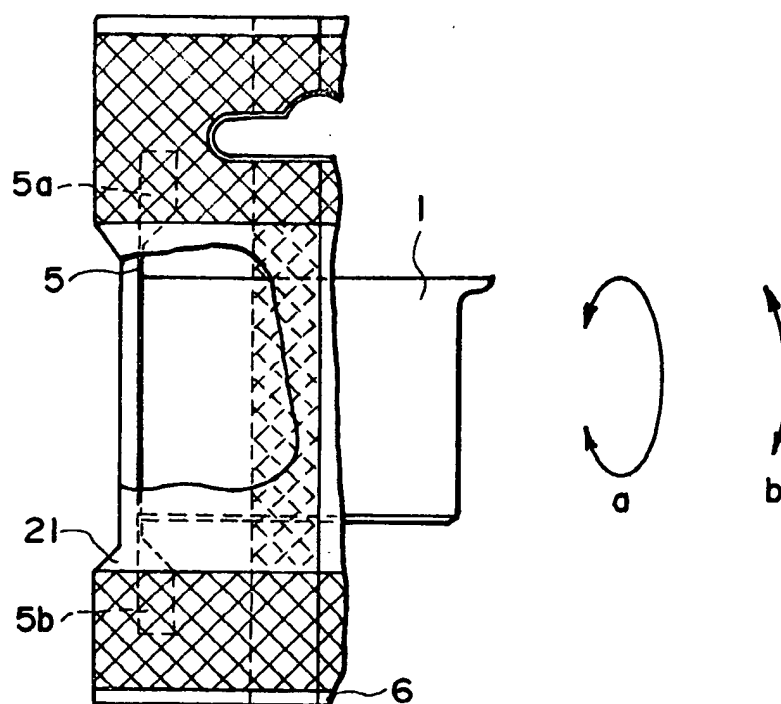


FIG. 8

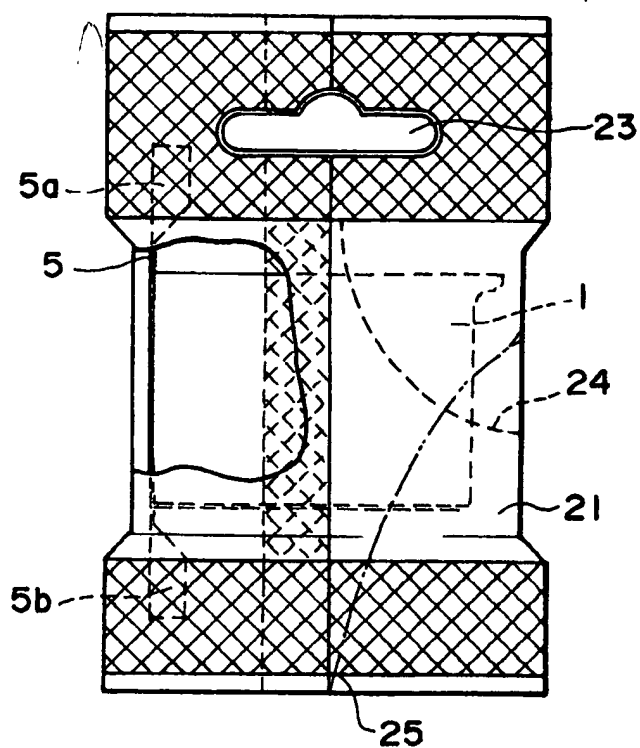


FIG. 9

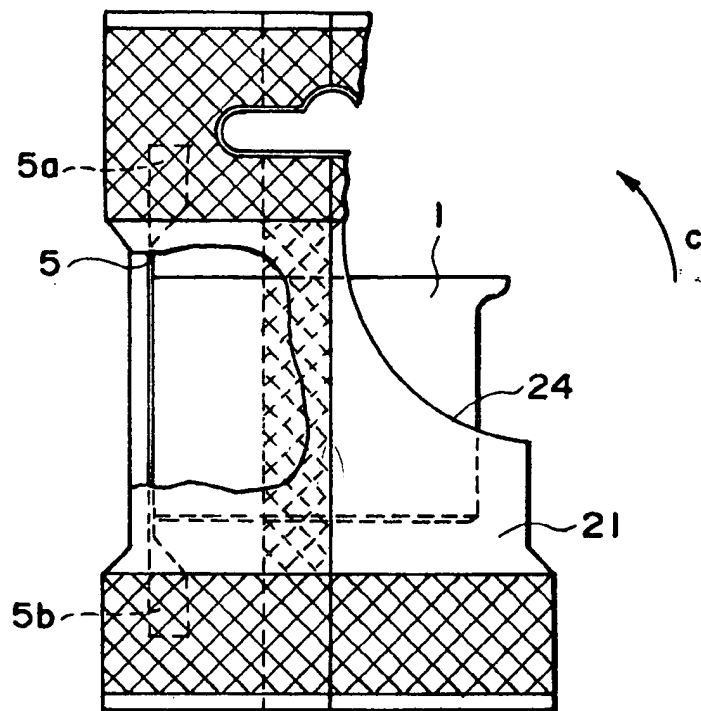


FIG. 10

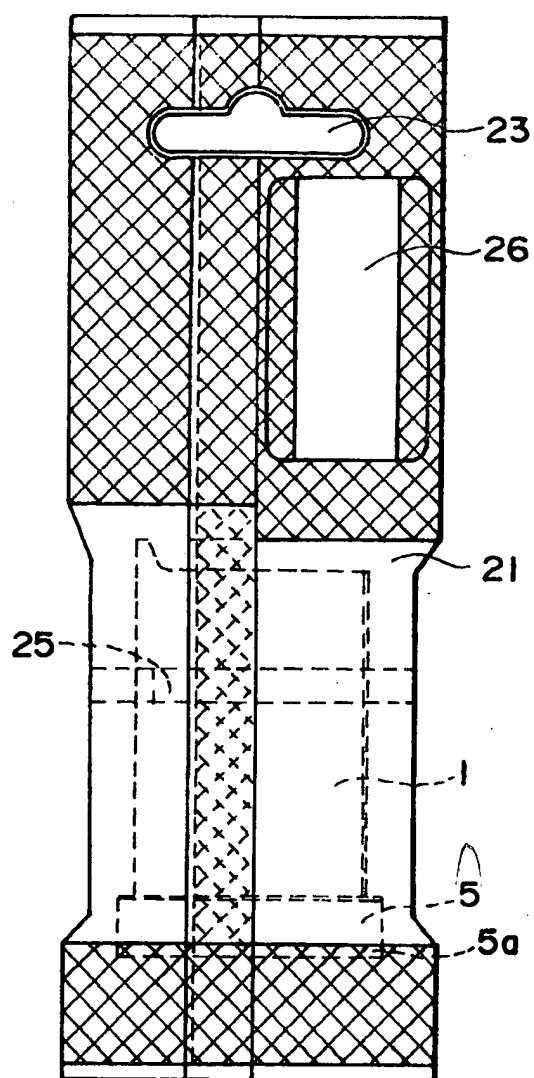


FIG. 11

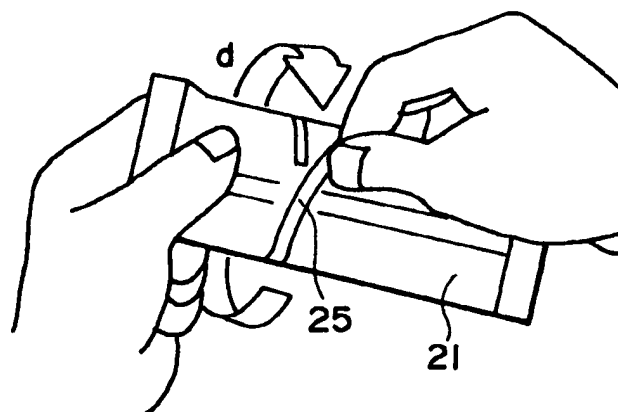


FIG. 12

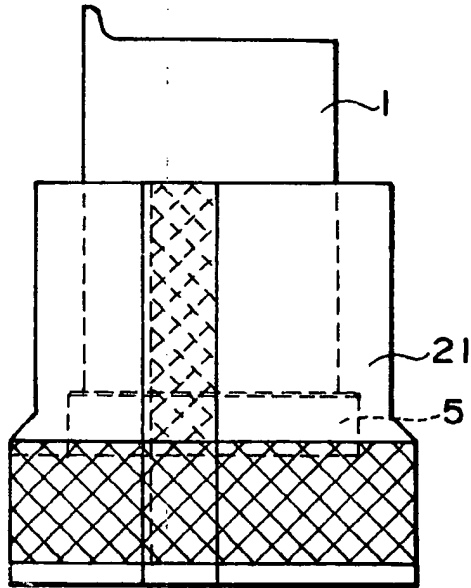


FIG. 13

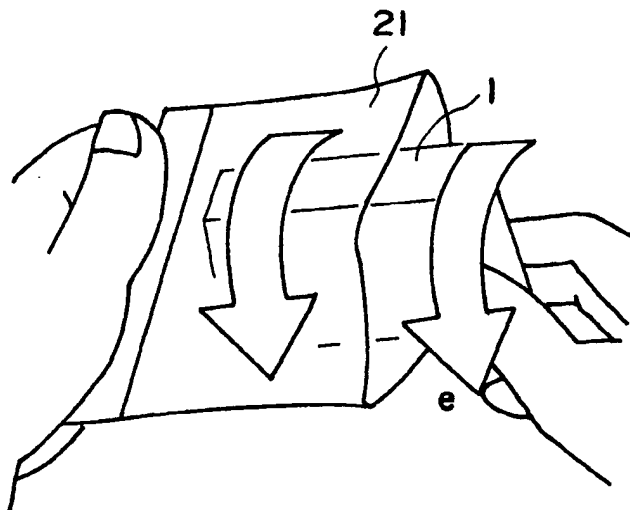


FIG. 14

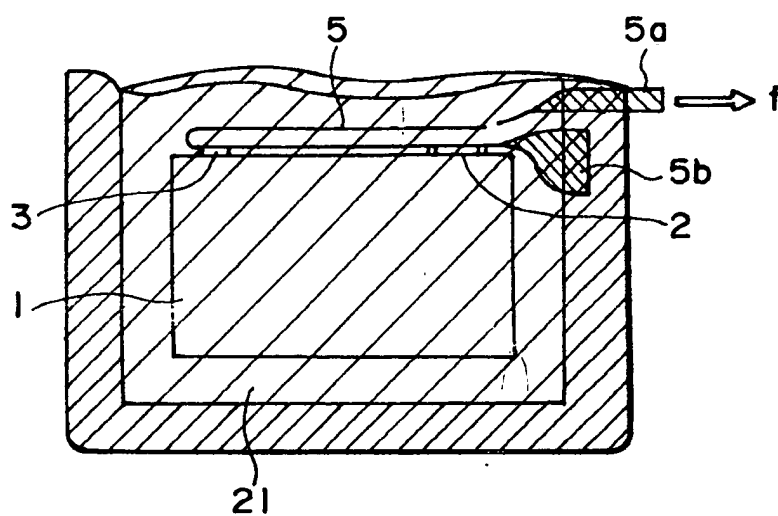


FIG. 15

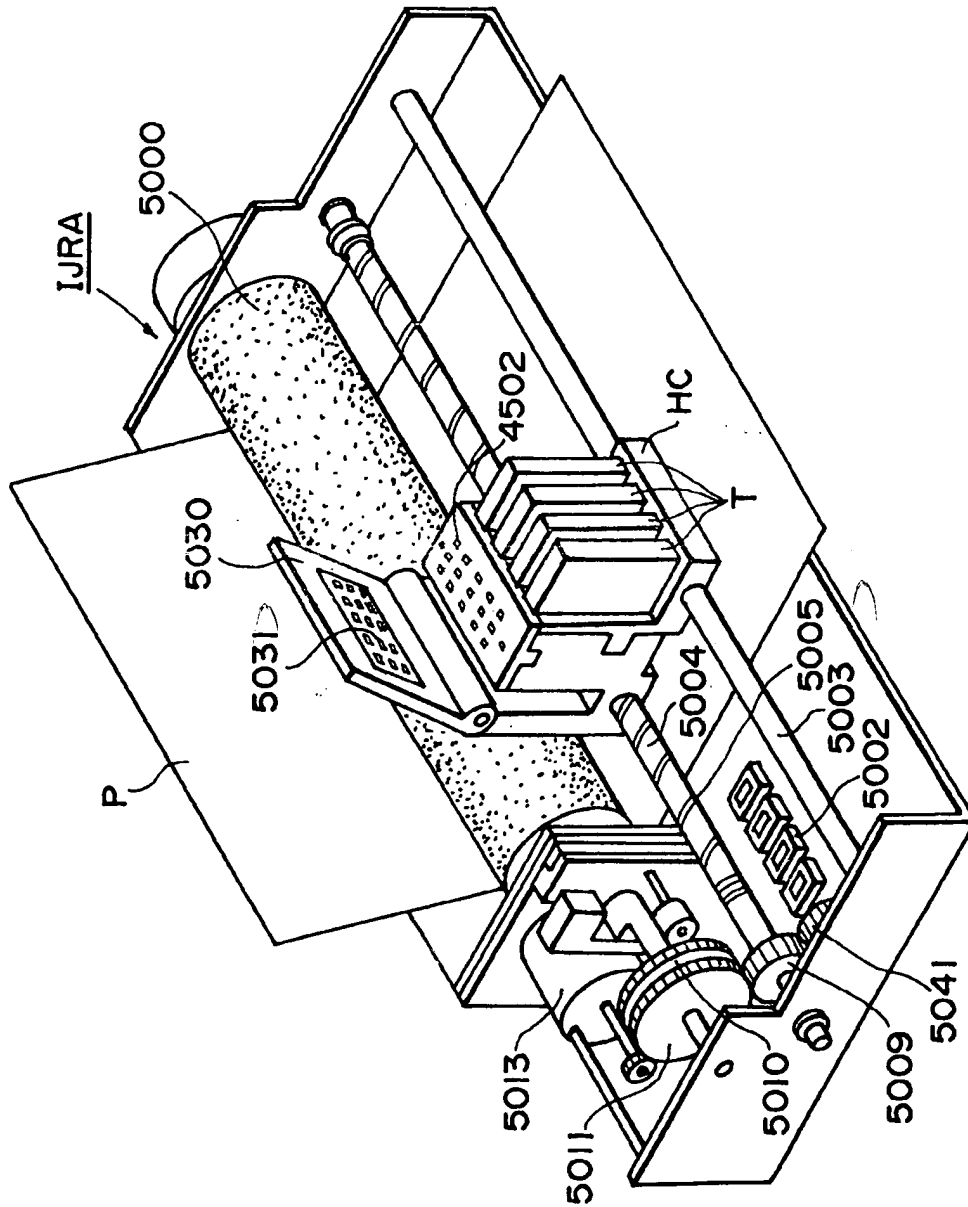


FIG. 16



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 94 10 7957

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.5)
X	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 011, no. 196 (M-601) (2643) 24 June 1987 & JP-A-62 019 460 (RICOH) * abstract *	1,7,13, 14	B41J2/175 B65D77/00
X	US-A-3 002 674 (C.E.WRIGHT) * column 2, line 3 - line 8; figures *	1	
A	WO-A-86 02909 (3M) * abstract; figure 3 *	2	
A	GB-A-812 278 (G.SCHICKENDANZ) * page 1, line 80 - line 85; figures *	3,4	
A	US-A-2 920 759 (F.C.CARNES) * column 1, line 1 - line 6; figures *	1	
A	WO-A-88 00561 (MOREIRA DE CASTRO ALVES) * abstract; figures *	1	
A	EP-A-0 423 374 (CANON KABUSHIKI KAISHA) * the whole document *	1,5,6,8	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.5) B65D B41J
A	EP-A-0 456 840 (CANON KABUSHIKI KAISHA) * the whole document *	1,5,6,8	
A	EP-A-0 418 828 (CANON KABUSHIKI KAISHA) * the whole document *	1,5,6,8	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 22 September 1994	Examiner Zanghi, A
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application I : document cited for other reasons A : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	